

SENATE BILL 1912

By Kilby

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68,
relative to the Fair Patient Billing Act.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the Fair Patient Billing Act.

SECTION 2.

(a) The purpose of this act is to advance the prompt and accurate payment of health care services through fair and reasonable billing and collection practices of hospitals.

(b) The general assembly finds that:

(1) Medical debts are the cause of an increasing number of bankruptcies in Tennessee and are typically associated with severe financial hardship incurred by bankrupt persons and their families.

(2) Patients, hospitals, and government bodies alike will benefit from clearly articulated standards regarding fair billing and collection practices for all hospitals in Tennessee.

(3) Hospitals should employ responsible standards

(4) Patients should be provided billing information from hospitals sufficient to determine the accuracy of the bills for which they may be financially responsible.

(5) Patients should be given a fair and reasonable opportunity to discuss and assess the accuracy of their bill.

(6) Patients should be provided information regarding the hospital's policies regarding financial assistance options the hospital offers to qualified patients.

(7) Hospitals should offer patients the opportunity to enter into a reasonable payment plan for their hospital care.

(8) Patients have an obligation to pay for the hospital services they receive.

SECTION 3.

(a) Each hospital shall post a sign with the following notice:

"You may be eligible for financial assistance under the terms and conditions the hospital offers to qualified patients. For more information contact [hospital financial assistance representative]".

(b) The sign posted pursuant to subsection (a) shall be posted conspicuously in the admission and registration areas of the hospital.

(c) The sign shall be in English, and in any other language that is the primary language of at least five (5%) of the number of patients served by the hospital annually.

(d) Each hospital that has a website shall post a notice in a prominent place on its website that financial assistance is available at the hospital, a description of the financial assistance application process, and a copy of the financial assistance application.

(e) Each hospital shall make available information regarding financial assistance from the hospital in the form of a brochure, an application for financial assistance, or other written material in the hospital admission and registration areas.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring

it.